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Home but forgotten: The war our veterans face off the battlefield

By Michael Popa II
NEWS STAFF WRITER

Formerly known as Armistice Day, Veterans Day is a holiday created to honor the end of World War I on Nov. 11, 1918.

Formalized by Congress exactly 20 years after that date, a statement from President Harry S. Truman expressed that Nov. 11 was dedicated to the cause of world peace.

However, soon after the end of World War I, other wars, such as World War II and the Korean War, followed.

The previous legislation passed in 1938 was amended to cover not just soldiers of World War I, but to all service members and veterans who had dutifully and honorably served in any action.

This is what changed the name from “armistice” and replaced it with what we know it to be, “veterans.”

In a letter to Harvey V. Higley, the Veterans Day National Committee chairman, President Dwight D. Eisenhower said he hoped “all veterans, their organizations, and the entire citizenry will join hands to insure proper and widespread observance of this day. I have every confidence that our Nation will respond wholeheartedly in the appropriate observance of Veterans Day.”

Another interesting note about Veterans Day is the lack of an apostrophe in the name “Veterans.”

As explained by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, “Veterans Day is not a day that belongs to veterans, it is a day for honoring all veterans.”

While the holiday serves as a reminder of the heroes who bravely fought to protect the freedoms we bear as American citizens, there’s a darker side to the remembrance of the unsung heroes our nation has born.

An unfortunate characteristic of the veteran population in the U.S. is the suicide rate amongst those who have so selflessly served. Unable to access the resources necessary to address mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety and, more infamously, PTSD, veterans are more often than average relegated to the despairs of homelessness, alcoholism and suicide.

According to the September 2021 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report, more than one in every four veterans turns to suicide, whereas fewer than one in five non-veteran Americans commit suicide every year.

Where the national suicide rate has only slightly increased from 15% to 18%, the veteran suicide rate has skyrocketed from 17% to 30% since 2001 after the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Regarding means of suicide, veterans are also 50% more likely to use a firearm than non-veteran Americans.

Another saddening fact about the U.S. veteran pop-



PHOTO BY Jared Craig

U.S. flag raised outside the Military Science building on campus.

ulation is the rate at which veterans turn to drugs and alcohol as a means to cope.

According to American Addiction Centers, over 22% of veterans suffer from SUDs, or Substance Use Disorders, whereas only 6% of the rest of the country suffers from these same addictions. Whether it be alcohol, illicit drugs, narcotics or smoking, veterans are across the board more likely to suffer from addiction.

The rate of homelessness follows the suicide and addiction rates in the veteran community.

According to the Military Times, veteran homelessness increased 50% between 2001 and 2019. More concerning, however, is that while veterans only make up 6% of the country’s population, they constitute 8% of the country’s homeless population.

For Maddie Shreve, a sophomore at USU, these statistics are astonishing for her. Her patriotic personality and respect for veterans makes it hard to believe more isn’t being done to give back.

“I think that the research shows that clearly mental health issues follow participation in the military. It shouldn’t be so hard to get help,” she said. “They risked their lives for our country and dedicated all their time for our freedom and because of their sacrifice it has resulted in hardship. Just out of respect, they should be the last ones on the street.”

Each of these issues would presumably be handled at least in part by the Department of Defense’s Veterans Affairs administration, but inefficiencies and lack of resources have made the VA ineffective at its job, as publicly scrutinized by the veteran community.

Not only do veterans have to fill out a 23-page form to apply for disability, but they also have to prove their injuries and disabilities are combat-related. Failure to do so results in rejection, but, with over 400,000 claims filed since 2003, it often takes several months for veterans to learn of their application status, meaning veterans have to find their own ways to cope, often with drugs and alcohol or suicide.

Without the resources they need to reassimilate into civilian lifestyle, our retired service members might be remembered this Veterans Day, but many of them are still forgotten.



Michael Popa II is a sophomore at USU studying human biology, statistics and mathematics. He also serves as a combat medic for the United States Army and has a podcast called Deep Roots that you can find on Aggie Radio.

— Michael.Popa@usu.edu

Cache Coffee raises suicide prevention awareness by providing safe space for weapons

By Jared Adams
NEWS STAFF WRITER

**This article contains content related to suicide and mental health issues. If this is triggering for you or someone you know, you can contact on-campus Counseling and Psychological Services at 435.797.1012.*

A local coffee shop decided to store firearms for gun owners experiencing mental crises.

Cache Coffee and More, located at 970 S. U.S. Highway 89, encourages individuals who are experiencing thoughts of suicide to have a safe, judgement free place to store their weapons while they cool off and seek help.

Jamie and Mindie Buttars are the co-owners of the shop. They started offering the service after a close friend committed suicide earlier this year.

"Suicide has gone rabid lately," Jamie said. "There's not really a lot of help up here to take care of that."

Mindie hopes the changes will encourage individuals to make the responsible decision without the fear of stigma or the loss of their firearms.

"There's the police station," Mindie said. "But there's so many people who are afraid to turn their weapons in because it's scary. It's intimidating to walk into a police station and ask them to take your firearms."

All that Cache Coffee does is open the safe and let customers store their firearms until they're in a better space mentally. They also offer locks if individuals don't feel comfortable leaving their firearms at the shop.

Cache Coffee acquired their safe through Al's Sporting Goods with the help of a local Marines Corps auxiliary unit. They are also currently working with a local attorney to figure out the legality of having individuals sign over their weapons.

Mindie explained that people must show a document that from a mental health professional that states they are in the right mindset along with proof of identification.

Each firearm that the safe carries have all been voluntarily signed over by their owners.

The Buttars said the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

"The original post blew up," Jamie said. "It's been viewed 17,000 times which I was not expecting to happen."

Mindie also was excited to see other businesses in Weber, Davis and Tremonton have shown interest in doing the same



PHOTO BY Bailey Rigby

Cache Coffee, located off of US-89 in Logan, is now offering a service for individuals to store guns as a form of suicide prevention.

thing.

"All I can really hope for right now is that one person can be saved," Mindie said. "If just one life can be saved from this, it would all be worth it."

Mindie also said everyone has something incredible to offer.

"This safe is available for anyone who walks through that door and needs it," she said.

"There is such a stigma surrounding mental health here," said Kiki Saker, a USU junior. "I feel like people are more inclined to repress their emotions."

Saker said she thinks mental health can be overlooked because it isn't outwardly visible.

"Someone can have years of turmoil and show no signs of emotional distress," Saker said.

That includes USU students. Suicide and mental health are both issues that can heavily impact college students.

According to a study from the American Psychological Association, 53% of college students have struggled with feelings of

depression and 9% have considered suicide. It is also the highest cause of death in Utahns aged 18-24.

Saker fears those numbers are inaccurate.

"I've heard a large number of my peers admit to struggling with suicidal thoughts," Saker said. "It's really sad — regardless of accuracy — how high those numbers are."

Read the rest of this story at
usustatesman.com.



Jared Adams is sophomore at USU studying communications. Outside of news writing, Jared enjoys coffee, elephants, rainy days and Taylor Swift.

— Jared.Adams@usu.edu



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Edward Harimoto

The mystery behind USU's tunnels

By Maggie Erikson
NEWS STAFF WRITER

Unknown to most students, there are more than two miles of tunnels running below their feet as they walk to their classes. These tunnels provide the heating and cooling for all the buildings and residence halls on campus and, recently, south campus residents got to take a look.

For a limited-edition event on Oct. 27 and 28, the students living on the south end of campus were invited to tour the tunnels as part of the resident's association.

During the first week of school, resident assistants from Moen, Reeder, Greaves and Merrill Hall planned a list of activities they wanted to do this semester to encourage students to mingle with each other.

Some of these activities included dinners, a haunted house and, of course, the tunnels.

Sophia Kokoshka, a resident assistant in Moen Hall, said it took a combined effort to come up with the unique idea. Although she said it wasn't easy scheduling tour guides and making flyers, it was something they all thought would be worth it. Many students were interested in touring the tunnels, even more than the organizers expected. Ten people came to the tour on Oct 27, but closer to 30 were able to participate the next day.

"I went on the tour because I felt it would be a good opportunity to get to know the campus on another layer and see how everything is connected," said Hailey Larson, a USU student.

And the tunnels really do connect everything on campus. Students on the tour were able to walk all the way from the Central Energy Plant, which is located near Maverik Stadium, to the Merrill-Cazier Library completely underground.

According to Reid Olsen, the manager of the Central Energy Plant who led the tour, the tunnels are a more convenient way to provide heating and cooling to the campus.

Large pipes containing steam up to 300 degrees Fahrenheit and thousands of gallons of water are much easier to maintain and repair using the tunnels. The tunnels also carry fiber optics and connect campus buildings to the internet.

Students may have also noticed the large grates, covered by cement blocks around campus. These are actually vents leading directly down into the tunnels, providing ventilation and keeping the tunnels at a comfortable year-round 70-80 degrees.

"My favorite part was when we were going through the tunnels, looking up at some parts and seeing where it goes out above ground," Larson said. "Every day I pass many of those vents above ground, so I loved seeing what was on the other side of it."

The tunnels seem to be such a mysterious and spooky part of USU, that the theme of the Howl this year was, "What Lies Below" which is based on the underground passageways.

Kokoshka thought this was convenient, given they planned this activity before the theme was announced.

Amanda LeVitre, another USU student, agreed and said it made the tour even more enticing. She said it even set the scene for a good way to end Halloween, especially when they turned all the lights out.

According to Olsen, getting a tour of the tunnels is rare but not impossible. He gives about four to five tours each semester. The one thing he wants students to know is they are the priority at the Central Energy Plant.

"We'd like to be as efficient and green as possible, but our number one priority is being reliable," Olsen said. "We want you guys to have heat in the winter and cooling in the summer, and next to that is efficiency. We try to be as environmentally responsible as possible."

Despite some mysterious conspiracies that some may have about the tunnels, they aren't anything to be afraid of.



PHOTO BY Edward Harimoto
USU underground tunnels during a tour.

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Logan to be home to popular new businesses

By Jared Adams
NEWS STAFF WRITER

Popular businesses including Dutch Bros Coffee, In-N-Out Burger, WinCo Foods, Cupbop and Cafe Zupas all plan to open locations in Logan in coming months.

Dutch Bros Coffee is renovating a property at 910 Main St. formerly owned by a Papa Johns. No opening date is announced. The coffee chain, which was starting in Oregon in 1992, opened its first store in Utah in May of 2020. Since then, over a dozen stores have opened across the state.

WinCo Foods, a warehouse-style supermarket, is taking the location previously occupied by Shopko at 1341 Main St. and plans to open its doors in December. Since WinCo announced an expansion to Utah in 2009, five locations have been built, making this location the sixth store in Utah.

In-N-Out Burger, a fast-food chain, is building a store at 404 Main St. on the lot formerly occupied by Nyla's Shell gas station. Construction on the store has begun, but no opening day is announced. The Logan location will be the 12th in the state. In-N-Out was labeled the best burger in fast food by Business Insider in 2019.

A Korean barbeque, Cupbop, announced a Logan location on Facebook in July. A "coming soon" banner for the chain is now hanging on the former Sweetly Divine location at 695 W 1725 N. The Utah-based company started out as a food truck in 2013 and has grown rapidly since. Today, the chain has more than 20 restaurants and six food trucks across Utah, Nevada and Idaho.

Cafe Zupas was announced in June, and is planned to be built at 700 Main St., the former site of an A&W Restaurants. The cafe, which serves soup, salad and sandwiches, was started in Utah in 2004 and now has locations in Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Ohio.

"I love soup and they always have so many soup selections to choose from," said Holly Daines, the mayor of Logan.

A rumor is circulating about Target considering opening a store in Logan. The Idaho State Journal reported in February that the retailer was looking at a location in the city.

"We're talking to them, but it's slow moving. I know they want to be in Logan," Scott Brady from Mountain West Commercial Real Estate told ISJ. "They're looking at several options, but they haven't committed to us."

Mountain West Commercial Real Estate also brokered the deal to bring In-N-Out to Logan.

The retailer had discussions regarding a location at both the Cache Valley Mall and the old site of Macey's on 400 N. on the same block as In-N-Out's construction site.

Daines said she is also excited for the positive benefits of these businesses.

"These companies obviously see an excellent market here in Logan and Cache Valley," Daines said. "The benefit to our community is sales tax. A large portion of the city's budget comes from sales tax, so that is a positive financial benefit to the city although there are also additional costs for infrastructure and services such as police, fire, etc."

Daines also said students at Utah State University should be excited for the growing changes and the new dining and shopping options.

"I would kill for their animal-style fries," said Emily Hill, a USU student. "I have no concerns about these new businesses succeeding here."

A concern expressed about the new locations is the potential impact on small businesses. Logan is home to a number of small businesses, many of which will be competing with the larger chains.

Caffe Ibis, a staple in Logan and USU, is one of these small businesses.

USU alumni Randy Wirth and Sally Sears started the coffee business in 1976 as Straw Ibis, which became Caffe Ibis in the 1990s.

Lisa Wilson became the president and CFO of Caffe Ibis in 2019. She said she is confident Ibis will be able to compete with Dutch Bros once it opens.

According to Wilson, she said that their specialty coffee is what sets them apart from other coffee businesses and reflects their overall mission.

She also stated that small businesses just have to figure out how to compete with new companies that have different levels of resources.

"We are committed to social justice and environmental stewardship issues through providing organic, Fair Trade and SMBC/Bird Friendly coffees," Wilson said. "These values are also shared by members of the Aggie community who visit our shop or seek out our roasted beans around the country."

Read the rest of this story at usustatesman.com.



New In-N-Out location being built at 404 Main St. in Logan.

PHOTO BY Paige Johnson

Veterans Resource Office provides comaraderie for military members

By Clarissa Casper
LIFESTYLES STAFF WRITER

Ken Bruderer, a student who spent seven and a half years in the U.S. Army, had a difficult transition from military to civilian life. “It was extremely challenging,” Bruderer said. “To say the least.”

He is not alone in his experiences. Many students come to Utah State University as veterans — or family members of veterans — and face the same challenges. USU’s Veterans Resource Office provides these students with benefits and resources to help them with this difficult transition.

The biggest challenge according to Bruderer was the switch from an environment where he knew exactly what his place was. He found comfort in the rules and regulations in the military.

“You go from that to a place where there are no set guidelines,” Bruderer said. “It’s hard going from the mindset that I am doing everything for the benefit of others, to just myself.”

Without regulations, Bruderer had a hard time figuring out what he wanted to do for himself.

“It’s just me out here,” Bruderer said. “I had to figure out what I wanted to do and the best way to do it all on my own.”

The entire world changes once you leave the military, according to Bruderer. Many of the things that are culturally acceptable in the military aren’t in civilian life. Adjusting your behavior and values to fit a culture can be difficult.

“Your place in the world feels completely upside down,” Bruderer said.

Another USU student and military veteran, Seth Newman, also finds the transition from being in the Marines to being a student comes with its unique challenges.

“You go from a situation where you depend on the guy or girl next door,” Newman said. “They have your back and you’ve got their back. But then you come to the civilian world and no one has your back.”

The Veterans Resource Office at USU provides these veterans with a sense of community hard to find outside of the military. Students come to the office with completely different backgrounds, but find a sense of comradery with those students there they can relate to because of their shared experience of being in the military.

“That unifying factor helps out a lot with the struggles that people here have every day,” Bruderer said.

Many of these students have similar trauma, and the

come out of his shell.

“Most people outside of the military don’t really understand the military mindset,” Gutierrez said. “It’s nice to have a place where I can socialize with people on a level deeper than the surface.”

Of all the resources the office provides, the best one for these students was giving Bruderer, Newman and Gutierrez a place where they can have a community.

“It’s pretty much group therapy,” Newman said.

While they said a sense of community and comradery is the biggest benefit, the office provides many other resources for student veterans.

Tony Flores, the director of the Veterans Resources Office — a veteran himself — said he makes sure veterans who attend USU get certified on time in order to receive the right benefits. The office also has many programs including the Veterans Integration Academic Leadership Program where students are paired with a peer mentor who can help them transition to civilian life.

“We do provide some different learning opportunities outside of the regular academic career,” Flores said. “For example, some financial literature and things that are called new skills that are important.”

Being a veteran himself, Flores understands the challenges of switching from the military to college.

Because of that, he said he has a passion to be involved with helping these students.



The Veterans Resource Office in the TSC.

PHOTO BY Bailey Rigby

Veterans Resource Office provides a safe space for these students to talk about these issues.

“Our identity was kind of like swallowed up in the military and we have all spent anywhere between three to who knows how many years in that environment where our identity was set in stone,” Bruderer said. “Then you get spat out of that, and you’re back into a regular civilian life where you have to refigure out who the hell you are.”

Bruderer said having the friends and resources at the Veterans Resources Office helps him and others feel like they have a support system.

Jonathan Gutierrez, a veteran and USU student, said the Veterans Resources Office is one of the only places he can

Read the rest of this story at usustatesman.com.



Clarissa Casper is a sophomore studying journalism and aquatic science at Utah State University. Outside of writing for the Statesman, she loves to hike, write poetry and watch whales.

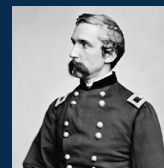
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The War on Christmas cannot end until Christmas stops its illegal occupation of November

Students blend the rules in a new art exhibit

By Sage Souza
LIFESTYLES STAFF WRITER

The brand-new exhibitions now available in the smaller art galleries in the Chase Fine Arts Center are chock full of pieces made exclusively by the students at USU — and are now featuring a wide swath of talent as the Graduate and Undergraduate Exhibitions have been installed.

“This is definitely one of my favorite ones,” said gallery monitor Katherine Spencer. “Coming in this morning, I saw it for the first time and I was blown away with the quality of the work here.”

Spencer is a junior studying Human Experience Design and Interaction (she said it’s basically web design), but has been impressed with the sheer physical magnitude of some of the pieces submitted by USU students. She pointed out several she was struck by, the least of which was a giant citrine stone carving placed near her desk.

“I would love to see how the artist made that,” she said.

The exhibition features projects across all mediums, from stark oil paintings, to intricate art prints, to stoneware sculpted out of wood. According to its event advertisement, “these students represent all the art and design disciplines, including ceramics, drawing and painting, printmaking, sculpture, art education, photography, interior architecture and design, and graphic design.”

Senior Carrie Richardson submitted several pieces for consideration, the crown jewel of which is a wedding dress that has a beautiful drawing (that was done all completely by hand) on its train.

“This was a project for a class and it was supposed to showcase how to draw on not normal material,” she said. “Like looking outside of just paper.”

Richardson says she felt inspired to work on a wedding dress train because she “felt like that was kind of the perfect space” for her vision.

She then went searching for her subject. Richardson

took pictures all over town, but settled on a more rural scene.

“I decided I liked the image of this dirt road that had a dead-end sign next to it,” she said. “I thought it was an interesting social commentary about how a lot of people feel about marriage and weddings, especially nowadays. I thought it would be a fun kind of social experiment piece.”

Olivia Roundy, a junior studying drawing and painting, submitted two art prints from her class on printmaking.

When debating which of her pieces to submit, she said “I went through all of my pieces, and I wanted to do something recent, so I just went through all of my pieces from the semester that I had done that I really liked.”

Roundy feels really grateful the Logan USU campus had the space, resources and hours for her projects that she might not otherwise have at home.

“I like to use the studios here normally, especially for my printmaking projects. Usually I would come in after classes to work on my prints,” she said.

Roundy said she spent at least 30 hours on her submissions.

The Undergraduate and Graduate Exhibition will be on display in the Tippett and Eccles Galleries in the Daryl Chase Fine Arts Center from now until Nov 12.



Sage Souza is a senior studying political science and Spanish. In her free time, she enjoys long walks on the beach, making too many playlists on Spotify and retweeting Karl Marx fancams.

—sage.souza@usu.edu

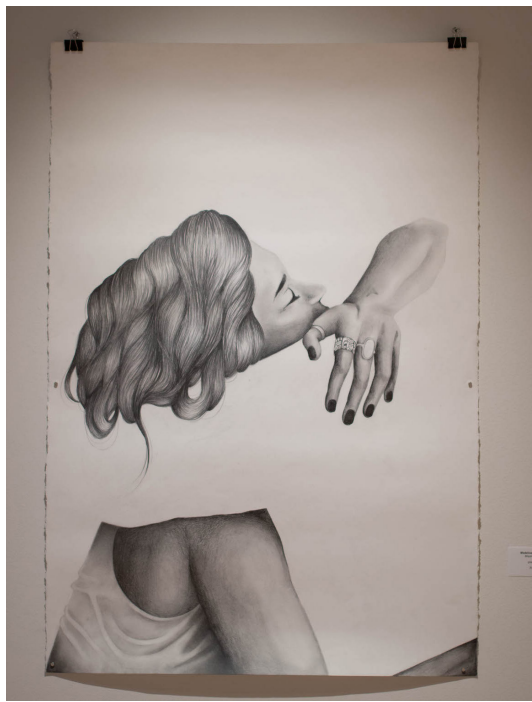


PHOTO BY Bailey Rigby
Madeline Williams' piece, “Missing You,” made in 2021.



Regan is a junior studying environmental studies and political science. Her show “Overexposed” plays Mondays @ 9 p.m.



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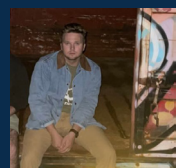
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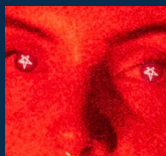


@jaden_delon



If you see me working myself up over my breakup from 8 months ago, it's in preparation for RED

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This month i'm doing a challenge called November, its where I try to make it through every day of November

@ldub20011



The greatest tragedy in history is that 107 year-old super-rich Edward Cullen gave Bella an engagement ring that looks like a prize from a gumball machine with some glitter glued on

USU bitcoin club challenges stereotypes

By Natalie Rust
LIFESTYLES STAFF WRITER

Bitcoin gets a bad rap. The rapidly growing cryptocurrency is often pegged as shady, risky, hard to use and difficult to understand.

Utah State University's Bitcoin club hopes to challenge this stereotype.

Before joining the club, Marissa Dotson, the club's treasurer, was wary of Bitcoin.

"It's really risky," Dotson said. "It's something that's new, something that somebody created, that nobody knows who he is. OK well, why would you trust that?"

After learning more about Bitcoin and joining the club, Marissa now has a different take. She still recognizes it has some risk factors, but realized, through careful application, it can pay off.

"Any cryptocurrency, any investment is always going to be risky," Dotson said, "but as long as you do your research, and as long as you know what you're getting yourself into, and you're not putting your whole life savings into it. It's a good investment opportunity to look into."

The founder, Edward Pfeiffer, started the club this semester after he became interested in creating his own club.

As he scrolled through USU's club catalog, scanning for ideas, Pfeiffer said he was surprised to find USU didn't have a Bitcoin club.

Ever since the club's creation, it has continued to grow. Only two people came to the first meeting, but now the club has around a dozen with over 40 people on their discord server — the club's main form of communication. "We have new members coming and going and stuff," said Kyle Turley, the club's secretary. "So our club itself is pretty open."

The club focuses on three main objectives: educating the public about Bitcoin, creating a fun environment and philanthropy work.

Yes — philanthropy work. The club donates to non-profit organizations around the community.

"If we can help people in the Cache Valley have a better life and have a better living, then we should be doing everything we can to do that," Dotson said.

While the club doesn't use money derived via Bitcoin to donate to organizations, they do hold a variety of fundraisers. For instance, Nov. 11 the club will be hosting a "Super Smash Bros" tournament at 5 p.m. in the Life Sciences Building. Funds will be donated to the Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection.

The club's fundraisers highlight two important aspects of Bitcoin. Firstly, it demonstrates how Bitcoin can be used to help marginalized communities.

Bitcoin doesn't require a third-party holder. Immigrants, who have traditionally utilized corporations such as Western Union to send money to family in their home countries, can send money instantly and with no fees



GRAPHIC BY Keith Wilson

using Bitcoin.

The club's philanthropic work also works to dismantle negative stereotypes about Bitcoin. It helps paint the cryptocurrency in a new light that underscores its positive uses such as for financial investment.

Bitcoin is a cryptocurrency or a form of currency just like the dollar or the euro. However, cryptocurrencies are decentralized, meaning they're not backed by a government or bank. This means everyone can access them, and they can't be influenced by a corporation or the government.

Bitcoin was created in 2008 and is regarded as the first cryptocurrency.

Many people make money by investing in Bitcoin. Bitcoin uses the law of supply and demand. Thus, the value of Bitcoin fluctuates over time. People buy Bitcoin in the hopes they will be able to sell it when the U.S. dollar value of Bitcoin is higher.

People also mine cryptocurrency. Miners use high-speed computers to independently confirm and verify transactions to essentially create a shared public ledger called a blockchain. After each verification, they are paid via Bitcoin.

The club's secretary, Kyle Turley, became interested in Bitcoin during spring of 2021 when he started mining Bitcoin on his family's computer. He ended up making about \$1,000.

The initial pay off got him interested in the cryptocurrency, so, when he stumbled upon the club a few months later in Discord, he decided to give it a shot.

"I thought, you know, hey, this may actually be something worth you know investing your time in," Turley

said. "So that's kind of how it all started."

The club meets every other week on Thursday. The club also holds occasional game nights where members can hang out and play "Super Smash Bros." Turley says it's a way to create a fun environment and levy the stress that can accompany talking about a complex subject like Bitcoin.

"It's just a way for all the members to come together and just, you know, have fun," Turley said.

Dotson, the club's treasurer, describes the club dynamic as chill, open and fun.

"We're super laid back," she said. "A lot of fun. You come to the club, and we try to welcome you as best we can."

The meetings are also usually pretty informational, and have helped Dotson learn a lot more about Bitcoin in a safe, chill environment.

"There's a lot more to cryptocurrencies that I didn't know about until I started going to these meetings," Dotson said. "So it's nice to have, like an educational standpoint for it."



Natalie Rust is a freshman interested in studying international studies at Utah State University. In her free time, she loves to read, thrift and explore the great outdoors.

—natalie.rust@usu.edu

New club, Aggiepella, will take stage for the first time

By Malorie Ellefson
LIFESTYLES STAFF WRITER

Who would’ve thought a school project could create a new a cappella club at Utah State University?

“I needed an idea for a capstone project,” said Lauren Knowles, a senior at USU. “I had an a cappella class that was so fun, and one day a lightbulb went off when I realized I should start an a cappella club for my project. I sent out emails and texts to everyone I thought would be interested, and here we are.”

The club is called Aggiepella, named by one of the students in the group.

There are 13 students in the club, many with different majors such as engineering, communications, math and different variations of music majors. These students came together to make a cappella arrangements of music — written entirely by USU students.

Taking a group of students with different talents, they’ve been able to put their skills together to compose their own music for their upcoming concert.

“Composition is something that people think you have to be overqualified for,” said Logan Kelley, who composed most of the songs the club will be performing. “But you don’t. I just started doing it one day and called myself a composer. It just comes with a lot of practice.”

The songs are all a cappella arrangements of popular songs — a cappella meaning singing without any instru-



The members of Aggiepella practice together in preparation for their upcoming concert.

PHOTO BY Jared Craig

ment accompaniment.

“For most of our arrangements, I’ll start by listening to the original song, and try to get some kind of artistic vision of how we can make this our own,” Kelley said. “Then you have to start wondering how you can make those instruments into voices.”

One of the ways to turn instruments into voices is through a vocal percussionist. Many a cappella group has somebody to imitate the beats of the drums using their mouth, this person is called a vocal percussionist or a beat boxer.

“As someone who did percussion in band, you hear a lot that if you can’t sing your part then you sure can’t play it,” said Ari Gammon, the vocal percussionist for Aggiepella. “I learned how to sing my part, started goofing off and then took an a cappella class. I decided I wanted to give it a shot. I put in a lot of practice, watching other vocal percussionists, and I was able to start doing something that I didn’t know I’d be good at.”

After the songs were composed, the club met two times a week to practice their songs and come up with ideas for other songs.

“Rehearsals are a really good mix of working hard, sight reading, learning music and just having a good time,” Kelley said. “They’re very

productive. We have to learn a lot of music very quickly. It’s so fun to have that collaborative environment where everyone’s so excited and happy about everything we’re doing.”

With all the practices, these students have been able to expand their friend group and enjoy similar interests with others.

“This is a place I feel comfortable,” Gammon said, “a place where I can come and make music with other people who also love to make music.”

The group’s upcoming concert is themed “Remember This,” based off of the recent single by the Jonas Brothers.

“For us, it’s a collection of songs that represent this chapter in our own lives,” Kelley said. “There were many times while rehearsing that someone said they wanted a specific song, so we’d put it together. It really is the songs that we feel represent who we are.”

“It’s us remembering the great songs that we know, the times that we’ve spent making this music together and having good laughs during rehearsals,” Gammon said. “Remembering the moments we’re in now and sharing that with other people.”

Their first concert will be Nov. 21 at 7 p.m. in the Manon Caine Russell Kathryn Caine Wanlass Performance Hall on campus and it’s completely free. Come share this experience with your fellow students, and get to know the new club on campus.



Malorie Ellefson is in her first year of studying English and working at USU Student Media. Outside of writing for The Statesman, she loves watching all types of movies, going to local plays and writing novels.

— malorie.ellefson@usu.edu

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Women's Basketball Preview

Kayla Ard and the Aggies look to turn a corner



PHOTO BY Edward Harimoto

The Utah State Women's Basketball team performs "The Scotsman" following their open scrimmage on Oct. 25 in the Wayne Estes Center.

By **Mark Greenwood**
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

Utah State Women's Basketball ended the 2020-2021 season with a 16-game losing streak as part of a 4-20 record. The Aggies struggled on both sides of the ball, scoring 63 points per game and allowing nearly 79 points per game.

The Aggies look to improve on multiple fronts. With nine players returning from last year and an addition of six more transfer players, Utah State is expected to be deeper and more talented.

Head Coach Kayla Ard said the team's depth is encouraging.

"We have playmakers this year," she said. "Our talent level has been increased a lot. Not just from these transfers but also from the returners. Because we put these other people around them, their games have elevated."

Ard sees her team playing on a level she hasn't seen before because of this new playmaking ability.

Even with the new roster makeup, the Mountain West Conference projected USU to finish last in the media day's preseason rankings released in October.

During the media day, senior team captain Emmie Harris said she loves where they are and emphasized a motto they have within the team: "Something to prove

every day."

After finishing last in the conference during the previous season, they have a lot to prove. But that doesn't seem to unnerve this older, more experienced group.

Everyone has their eye on two players — Harris and junior point guard, Faith Brantley. Of the returning players, Brantley and Harris had the most games played and the highest average points per game.

"Confidence," Brantley said. "It's not like on the court skill, but I think that's something improved on from last year. And it helps with my teammates believing in me and my coaching staff believing in me."

Harris got off to a quick start last year before a nagging ankle injury limited her effectiveness. After getting healthy during the offseason, she's ready to go and looking to have a big year.

Speaking highly of her basketball IQ and ability to be a catalyst on the floor, Ard also projects Harris will have a really good season.

The roster isn't the only thing that's been revamped. The Aggies made several coaching staff changes in preparation for the upcoming season. Ard hired Marc Wilson as an assistant coach and added to assistant coach Juawan Scaife's title, making him a recruiting coordinator.

After spending the 2020-2021 season with Cleveland State University, Wilson joins the team with 21 years of D1 coaching on his resume. Wilson and Ard got to know each other while coaching at Clemson University. Ard spoke of nothing but praise for Wilson, highlighting his experience, defensive mindedness, and ability to develop post players.

Scaife has been with the program since the hiring of Ard, but this will be the first year in his new role as recruiting looks to become more of a priority.

Recruiting is going to be an all-hands-on-deck effort while attacking at every front.

"I just want to get the best players we can get. I don't care where they come from," Ard said.

Scaife echoed her sentiment. "It will be a little bit of a mix of everything, whether it's junior college, high school kids or (transfer) portal," he said. "We will be pulling from every different avenue and every different angle we can."

Between the player development and coaching changes, expectations are high within the program. The Aggies aren't afraid of setting the bar high and they feel they can compete for a conference title with the current talent.

"That's something we really want to reach for," Scaife said. "Even if we don't reach exactly where we want to,

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I think we'll still be able to accomplish some things that we never even imagined at times, so the sky's the limit for our group."

Ard drove home the goal of improving on every possible front, including recruiting, student and community involvement, more complete gameplay and, most importantly, team dynamic and culture.

Culture is quickly becoming a big focus for this team early in the 2021-2022 season. After a disappointing 2020-2021 campaign, Ard's players are taking it upon themselves to change the dynamic of the team.

With six transfer players, a fluid team dynamic does not come right away. In a focused effort to create relationships and set a team culture, the women's team participated in "The Program" over the summer. "The Program" is an exercise where military professionals come and work with the team for four to eight hours to develop leadership skills and team bonding. Ard attributed some of the genuine relationships within the group to what occurred in those two days.

"Watching them protect each other and have each other's back and come together as one knowing that 14 of them couldn't do it, it has to be all 15, it was really cool to see the huge step they took," she said.

Another way the team is becoming a tighter unit and setting the culture is through weekly culture checks. This team wants to have a sense of increased accountability and is creating that through a weekly open forum to share thoughts, suggestions, and concerns about the team's current state.

Culture checks are the primary way the girls are all staying on the same page to accomplish their goals.

"If there are any problems that are arising on the team, we talk about those and talk about keeping our healthy culture in check so that no problems arise for us," Harris said.

Culture is a crucial concept for any organization but especially within a team that relies on other for success. The team hopes their focused efforts will translate into success on the court.


 @md_greenwood



PHOTO BY Edward Harimoto
Sophomore Meagan Mendazona dribbles down the court during the open scrimmage on Oct. 25.

Sampson: Involvement creates growth

Editor's note: Due to a production error, a guest column from Lucas Stevens was printed in place of this guest column in the Nov. 1 edition of the Statesman.

This school year has alreadyw been a re-cord-breaking season for our Fall Sports, and we have only just begun. We are just at the end of Football, Soccer and Volleyball seasons and the start of basketball season, and the excitement is at an all time high in Cache Valley. This year in sports has been a refreshing start for USU Athletics, especially post COVID-19. Not only are we restarting the tradi-tions and school spirit instilled through new and returning Aggies, but we have fresh faces on most of our teams. We have new coaches, players, staff and much more coming to Utah State.

The interesting thing about these new coaches are the new perspectives they bring to the table. We have new coaches from UMBC, Arkansas, Troy, and many other colleges. In meeting these coaches in one-on-one meetings I have been able to learn more about other colleges and what changes we can bring to Utah State.

What these coaches have told me is that they want to do whatever they can for the students. The student inter-action and engagement is the most important aspect to these coaches. Coaches have been coming to events to interact and create personal relation-ships with many students on campus. In my opinion, the more involved these coaches are getting with student involvement has a tendency to help grow attendance at certain sporting events.

For example, on October 25th, the Women's Basketball Coach held an event for the first time in Utah State History. It was an open practice to show students how the team is different this year than past years, with their new high speed tempo. The incentive, \$500 out of Coach Kayla Ard's pocket to one student. This was a way to show how invested Coach Ard is to the students to attend future Women's Basketball Games. This is only one example of how the coaches are making a difference to try and create friendships with students.

For me, the impact of these new fresh faces within Athletics has been eye opening, especially since after COVID. It has been hard to reteach thousands of students what it is like to be a part of the HURD, but with these new coaches, players, even students we are building a whole new



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Aggie Tradition of supporting more than just one sport. I have loved getting to know each Coach individually and seeing how the student section impacts each sport. The students truly don't know how impactful they are, and in this past season of Fall Sports, these coaches have told me just how crazy fun and wild the students are, and that energy is just what the athletes need to play better in every game. Students are a huge factor of each game, just as much as the student athletes.

The HURD has been bigger, louder, stronger and full of school spirit that is going noticed nationwide. Not only has this year been different, but the atmosphere of the HURD has been growing to more than just Football this Fall. We have had huge turn outs at our Women's athletic events especially. The impor-tance of supporting every sport has been something that I am passionate about, especially in this position. With this support we have seen how impactful the stu-dents are.

So I invite you to try your hardest to go out and support all of our student athletes in their games. Especially the lower attended games. You

will always find a friend to cheer with and I am confident that you will have a good time. Utah State has a great atmosphere of supporting others, especially in our Athletics program. So I hope to see you at the next home game!

And as always, gwaggies!

Taylor Sampson is a 5th-year senior at Utah State University from Draper, Utah studying digital media marketing. Taylor currently serves as a Vice President for the USU Student Association.

— athleticsvp.ususa@usu.edu

Flores: Veterans deserve more acknowledgement



PHOTO BY Bailey Rigby

Twenty two. 10%. Reintegration. Disability. Blank check. Band of brothers/sisters. Loss. Freedom. What are these? These are the wins and losses of veterans, what it takes to ensure our freedom, and what it costs. So why is it essential to acknowledge veterans throughout the year and not just Veteran's Day? I want to share a not-so-comfortable part of my military story and encourage other veterans to share their stories.

When I enlisted in the US Army, the US was entering a peacetime period (for the most part). In other words, the US did not have identified locations where large military

units were participating in combat operations. I was fortunate. However, when I arrived at my duty station, I quickly learned many of my brothers around me had witnessed battle firsthand the previous year. There had been an enormous amount of global unrest, and my decision to pause my education at Utah State and join the military was what I needed to do for my countrymen, family, and myself. A few years after leaving the military, many of my brother and sister service members would see combat. I would hear or read about people I served with giving the ultimate sacrifice.

One weekend in November 1993, I talked to my younger brother and learned he spoke to a recruiter and would be enlisting. He was excited, and if he and I joined under the buddy program, he would also get a bump in rank from Private 1 to Private 2. Win-win, right? I visited with his recruiter. It was the easiest enlistment this guy ever had, I didn't ask about a bonus, and while I could choose any field I wanted, I told him I would like to be in combat arms. He threw on a quick recruitment video showing a special operations infantry unit, and we were done. I was sold. When I left Utah State to join the military, I knew I would return. I viewed my enlistment as an opportunity to reflect on my life goals. So I went into the military as an 11X with the only guarantee that I would end up in the infantry. If I could pass OSUT (One Station Unit

Training), consisting of Basic, Advanced Infantry Training, Airborne School, and RIB, I would be well on my way to becoming a US Army Ranger and joining an elite infantry unit.

Once there, we found ourselves in pretty much a constant training cycle. Even in garrison during a non-training process, we would find ourselves at a shooting range gaining proficiency in one of the myriads of tools our weapons squad used. I recall one period of training where we were in garrison for only 3-5 days during three months. While this was all training, it was intense. During training, we lost our First Sergeant to a drowning accident; three soldiers from another company during a fast-rope exercise fell 40' – 50' through trees, killing one and injuring two severe enough they would be medically discharged. In addition to learning how to use weapons, we learned to dehumanize any perceived enemy. Quite possibly the most dangerous tool to learn.

Read the rest of this story at usstatesman.com

Tony Flores is the Director of the Veterans Resource Office. He is an Army Veteran and graduated from USU.

— tony.flores@usu.edu

Opinion: The Howl is a barrier for stopping sexual assault

While the issue of sexual harassment isn't a new one, recent social movements and university initiatives have drawn more attention to the problem of sexual misconduct in universities.

In general, universities try to foster safe environments for students to learn, but school isn't all about earning a degree. The social aspect of college is important, which is why Utah State University holds its annual Halloween event known as the Howl.

The Howl is a big deal at USU. The event draws thousands of students, not just from USU but also from all across the state, who are all looking for a good time. USU recognizes that the Howl offers a good opportunity for students to get away from tedious homework and monotonous studying for midterms.

Unfortunately, the Howl is often accompanied by increased reports of sexual harassment and assault, such as the three assaults reported at the 2019 Howl.

Compared to the swarms of students attending, there are only a handful of security officers and student volunteers to monitor the Howl. There are going to be parts of the event that will not have complete security. With security gaps, there are bound to be problems.

USU isn't ignorant of the problem and has been implementing new policies regarding the Howl in an attempt

to limit sexual misconduct. The proposed changes have usually been about increasing surveillance coverage and making crowded places like the dancefloor easier to monitor. Recent coronavirus regulations have also limited ticket sales to exclusively USU students.



PHOTO BY Joseph F Myers

These policies might reduce the number of sexual harassments, but it won't stop the problem.

USU could assign more security officers or more surveillance measures, but realistically there isn't a way to have every part of the Howl be safe at all times without interfering with student enjoyment at the event.

The Howl will always present a huge logistical problem in reducing sexual assault. It might reduce the risk of sexual assault if the event was shortened or canceled if behavior doesn't improve.

Around half of the sexual assaults in college occur between midnight and 6 a.m. If the duration of the Howl

was shorter, then students would be less likely to be active during the riskier hours of the night.

If shortening the Howl doesn't yield positive results, it is possible that canceling the event or drastically increasing the number of student volunteers might incentivize problematic Howl participants to be on better behavior.

Alternatively, student intervention is a valuable tool. Most people at the Howl just want to have fun and enjoy some time away from schoolwork. Don't let your peers ruin the event by acting up, especially if what they are doing is criminal and seriously harms other students.

The Howl is meant to encourage student wellness and give students time for some fun during the busy fall semester. If we as a student body can't guarantee the safety of our fellow students at this event, then now might be a good time to start seriously thinking about ways to fix the issue.

Bryant Saunders is a computer science major. He is a member of Utah State Speech and Debate and has an enthusiasm for discussing philosophy and politics.

— A02307089@usu.edu

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4	1	7	6	9	5	3	2	8
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The Stan L. Albrecht Agricultural Sciences Building on the USU campus.

PHOTO BY Jared Craig